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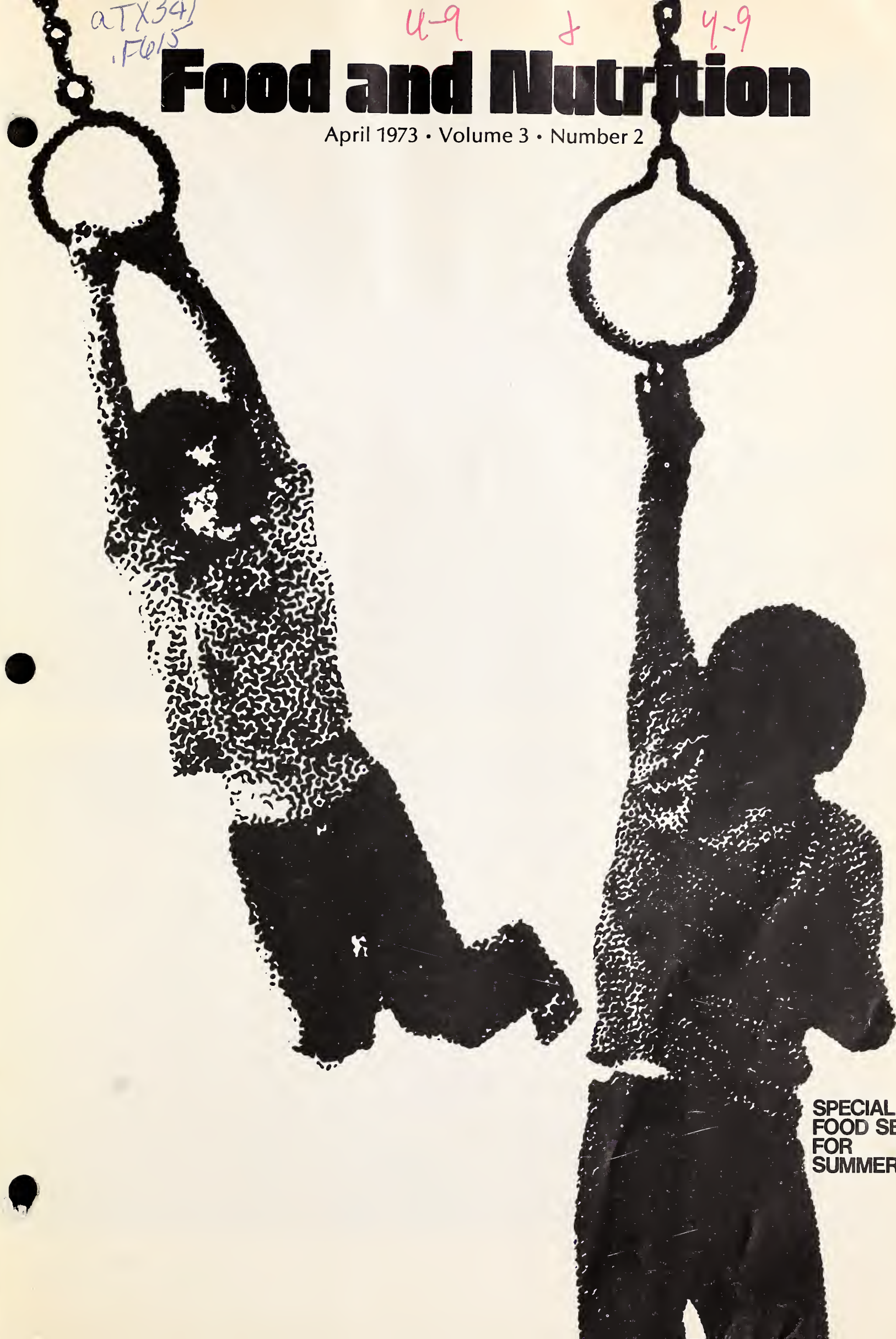
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SPECIAL
FOOD SERVICE
FOR
SUMMER!

Special Food Service for SUMMER!

IN PORTLAND

By Benedicto Montoya

IT'S NOON AND in a Portland, Ore., neighborhood park the tinkle of a small bell is somehow heard over the din of children at play. From the wading pool come barefoot children, shoes in hand, to join dust-covered athletes from the baseball diamond at the lunch table under the trees.

In the library of a school in a low-income neighborhood, a small group of children are left in suspense, wondering 'til story hour tomorrow if the little engine that could, did, as the school bell calls them to lunch.

At the zoo, children on a field trip crowd around their counselor, open their sack lunches, and talk about all the things they've seen and done that day.

Throughout the summer these scenes were repeated in various parts of the city as children from low-income families or from areas with many working mothers took part in the summer operations of the Special Food Service Program for Children.

In Portland, the FNS summer feeding program was sponsored by local groups through the Portland Public School District. This past summer there were nearly 80 program sites operating, serving about 4,000 children per weekday. USDA funded 80 percent of the cost of the program while local "in-kind" contributions—

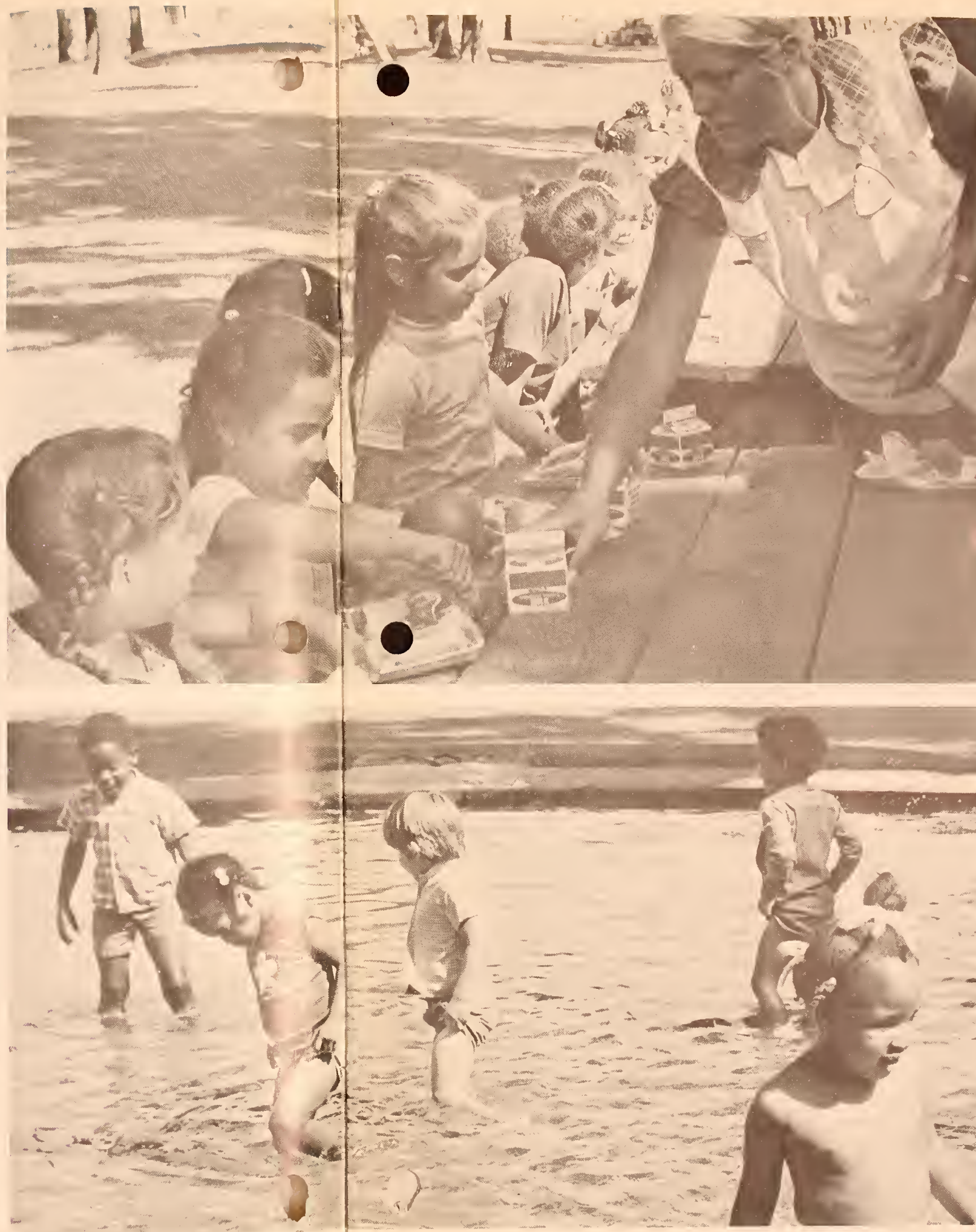
such as labor, facilities, and trucks—comprised the remainder.

The purpose of the program is to assure that children from low-income families receive at least one nourishing, well-rounded meal a day—just as they did during the school year under the National School Lunch Program.

The lunches the children received during the summer conformed to the Type A lunch—protein-rich foods, fruits and/or vegetables, bread and butter or fortified margarine, and milk. The meal provided each child with about one-third of his daily nutritional requirement. In addition to lunch, some children—generally those enrolled in day care centers—were served breakfast, and mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks.

Whether a child received a hot lunch or a sack lunch depended upon the type of summertime activity and the facilities of the sponsoring organization. Hot meal service required equipment to keep food warm as well as personnel to apportion it into individual servings. The cold plastic wrapped lunch was suited for parks, playgrounds and sites where no additional work was necessary. The sack lunches were used for activities such as field trips.

The meals were prepared in seven Portland public school kitchens and then delivered, generally by school district truck, to the program sites. The size of the orders ranged from 400 meals for a site in a low-income housing project, to four meals packed for Neighborhood Youth Corps cafeteria workers.



About 40 children enjoyed recreational activities and nutritious lunches last summer in Alberta Park, one of 75 feeding program sites in Portland, Ore.

Running the city's summer food service program and coordinating the efforts of the Portland Public School District with activities of the various site sponsors was the job of Mrs. Ruth Smalley, school food services coordinator, and Mrs. Edith Elonka, summer feeding program supervisor.

To insure that the food was handled and served according to USDA program requirements, Mrs. Smalley hired trained food service personnel to make unannounced site visits, point out deficiencies, and suggest ways to correct them. These were in addition to periodic inspections made by USDA personnel.

Approximately 75 percent of the meals were prepared at the Washington High School kitchen under the supervision of cafeteria manager Mrs. Grace Morin.

Starting at 6 a.m. every weekday, Mrs. Morin and her efficient staff of eight women and eight student helpers prepared and packed an average of 4,000 meals per day. Their highest daily total was 6,403 meals. In addition to hot meals—mostly packed in bulk for division into individual meals at the site—the Washington High School kitchen prepared cold lunches, sack lunches, breakfasts and snacks.

To assure that even the children receiving sack lunches got the proper amounts of food as specified under the Type A formula, every few minutes a sandwich would be taken out of the assembly line operation and weighed.

The smooth-running Portland program began operating in late May and continued for 72 weekdays. The number of lunches served during this period totaled 212,670. This figure, however, does not reflect the actual number of Portland children reached, since children were continually dropping in and out of programs as their summertime activities changed.

In addition to the lunches, more than 33,500 breakfasts and 84,000 snacks were served last summer. ☆

IN CINCINNATI

By Joan Luck and Milton Papke

DURING THE SUMMER of 1972, USDA worked directly with the city of Cincinnati to develop a model food service system adaptable to nationwide use to reach eligible children through the summer operations of the Special Food Service Program.

The project had two primary objectives: to set up an efficient, financially sound operation; and to use innovative approaches to provide nutritionally adequate lunches and snacks that are acceptable and appealing to children.

The Cincinnati Summer Food Demonstration Project was a cooperative effort involving USDA and three local agencies. The Cincinnati Recreation Commission served as the sponsoring agency, the Cincinnati Board of Education's Division of Food Services prepared the meals, and the Cincinnati Municipal Garage handled deliveries. USDA directly administers the Special Food Service Program in Ohio.

The project clearly demonstrated the importance of communication, coordination, and cooperation among the various agencies involved. The summer feeding program cannot be initiated overnight; much detailed planning is necessary well in advance of the summer season if the sponsor is to expect any degree of success.

The Cincinnati Recreation Commission officially opened its parks and playgrounds for summer activities on Monday, June 19. The food service operation began 2 days later and provided lunches or supplemental meals to about 9,000 children each weekday until the closing of the recreation activities on August 25.

During the 47-day period, 178,565 lunches and 242,115 supplemental meals were served. Of the total 420,680 meals, lunches made up 42.4 percent and supplemental meals 57.6 percent. Based on average daily participation, approximately 5,151 children received supplemental meals and 3,799 children received lunches.

Training

The Cincinnati Recreation Commission conducted a 3-day orientation meeting for its playground recreation personnel prior to the opening of the playgrounds. A 2-hour block was set aside for food service training in which Recreation Commission, School Food Services, and USDA representatives participated. A packet containing forms, handbooks, schedule times for food deliveries, and background information was distributed to each site supervisor.

In early July a second training meeting was held with the site supervisors. The superintendent, General Environmental Services, and representatives from the City Department of Health spoke on sanitation and safe food handling procedures. The session also included a review of completion of forms, how to handle excess lunches, and a general question and answer period.

Selecting Meal Service

Past experience in the summer feeding program has shown that it is unusually difficult to serve lunches at recreation sites which have little or no facilities—refrigeration and shelter during inclement weather or very hot days. Therefore, the type of meal service selected for each recreation site was determined by the type of facilities available.

Based on this, 16 sites served lunches and 34 sites served supplemental meals. The supplemental meal sites generally consisted of shallow or deep-water pools with adjoining playgrounds; the lunch sites were mainly year-round community buildings and similar buildings with playgrounds. Many of these also had outdoor pools.

Selecting the type of meal service based on available site facilities helped to minimize production of excess lunches and waste. All foods served at supplemental meal sites could be held over for a short time or returned to the assembly center.

Since lunch foods could not be recycled so easily, using only centers with indoor facilities meant that inclement weather had a lesser effect on lunch participation.

Despite this precaution there were,

as expected, some surplus lunches. The supplemental meal sites provided a perfect outlet for these lunches, which were transferred to various approved sites and distributed as additional meals. Although the transfer of meals was not totally satisfactory in the first days of operation, site supervisors and area supervisors soon adjusted to the procedures. Due to the success of the transfer system and proper adjustment of orders, no site had to return excess lunches to the central kitchen.

A charge of 10 cents for supplemental meals and 25 cents for lunches was established for paying children. A charge of 20 cents for supplemental meals and 50 cents for lunches was set for site directors and supervisory personnel.

Menu Planning

Previous experience with the operation of summer food service programs indicated that meal patterns—based on food groups and designed for use in structured situations such as schools and day care centers—are not especially appropriate for unstructured programs in parks, playgrounds, swimming pools and recreation centers. For this reason, the Cincinnati project offered a good testing ground for new approaches in terms of menu planning, new foods, new food service concepts and systems.

A nutritional goal of one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for 10-12 year-old children was set for planning lunch menus. Menus built around a sandwich entree followed to some extent the



Last summer in a cooperative effort between USDA and Cincinnati, more than 9,000 of the area's youngsters received lunches or supplemental meals at 50 recreation sites. Ranging in age from pre-schoolers to teenagers, participants enjoyed both indoor and outdoor activities in playgrounds, parks, pools, and gymnasiums.



lunch pattern specified in the program regulations. An entree of meat and/or alternate, fruit and vegetables, bread and milk were included. A cookie or baked product was added for dessert. Instead of butter or fortified margarine, a condiment such as mustard, mayonnaise, catsup or tartar sauce was used.

All food included on the lunch menu made a nutritive contribution toward the goal. For example, peanuts were served on one menu. The nutrients provided by this item were included in the total nutrient calculation. In the lunch pattern for the program, peanuts do not meet any part of the lunch requirements and can only be offered as an additional food.

To provide to the maximum extent possible lunches and snacks that were

acceptable and appealing to children, the menus for the project were planned in Cincinnati by the school food service supervisors. Their past experience in planning school lunch menus was invaluable in providing insight into well-accepted foods.

Other factors considered in planning the menus were cost, convenience, and suitability for a satellite operation. Menus built around hot and cold sandwich entrees that could be transported to 16 food service sites were planned.

At two sites one day a week the cup-can concept was tested. Used successfully in some schools without food service facilities, the cup-can system uses canned entrees in single serving sizes which can be quickly and easily heated in small ovens. In

At the Hirsh Recreation Center (left), one of 16 lunch sites served by the Cincinnati summer food service program, 150 children received a bag lunch with hot or cold sandwiches 4 days a week and a cup-can lunch once a week. All lunches were prepared in the central kitchen of the Cincinnati School Food Service (below), and delivered by the Municipal Garage. The delivery truck (right) was often greeted at the recreation areas by eager children.



Cincinnati, the two sites serving cup-can lunches used ten menus, which included a canned entree, fruit and/or vegetable, cookies or baked product, and milk.

New Food Products

Early in 1972 about 30 food manufacturing companies were contacted and invited to participate in the project. Most of the companies had previously submitted products for evaluation to the Rutgers University school feeding effectiveness project or had contacted FNS and presented new food products which offered improved nutrition and/or convenience in serving. The manufacturers were asked to consider the possibility of using USDA-donated foods in their products, which would allow them to provide the items to food service operators at reduced cost.

Thirteen new food items were used and evaluated for the summer food service program: fortified cookies, formulated grain-fruit products, and combination products (designed to supply the bread and butter component of the Type A lunch).

One additional new food item, a frozen fortified sandwich, was evaluated in the Cincinnati project. This sandwich was designed to provide one-third of the RDA (except for calories) of 10-12 year-old children when combined with one-half pint of milk. For the project, this item was combined with milk and a formulated-fortified cookie or baked product so that the calorie goal for the participating children was at least 80 percent of one-third of the recommended allowance.

All 47 lunch menus served provided 100 percent of the goal for all nutri-

ents except calories. Twenty-two of the 47 menus served provided 100 percent of the standard for calories. The other 25 menus provided at least 80 percent or more of the 835 caloric standard based on one-third of RDA for 10-12 year-old children.

Snack menus were designed to meet the pattern specified in the regulations for the Special Food Service Program. The snack menus included an 8-ounce serving of juice and a cookie, fruit pie or baked product.

USDA-donated foods were used to the maximum extent possible for both lunch and snack menus. Peanut butter and cheese were made available for use in sandwiches prepared for the lunches. All grape, pineapple and apple juices used for snacks were canned juices made available for the program by USDA.

Processing contracts were negotiated between the Ohio State Distribution Agency, Cincinnati School Food Service, and local bakeries (for loaf bread and buns) and three national baking companies (for cookies and fortified baked products). Local and national companies used USDA-donated flour and/or butter.

Preparation and Delivery

Lunches were prepared and packaged in a central kitchen. All food was transported by refrigerated trucks to the serving sites. Milk was delivered by local dairies to the lunch sites and stored in milk coolers until lunches were served.

Cold sandwiches, fruits, relishes (carrot sticks, tomato wedges, etc.) and cookies were packaged in labeled cardboard boxes for transporting. Once received at the lunch site these food items were stored in a milk cooler until lunch was served. Hot sandwiches were prepared in the central kitchen and placed in styrofoam-reinforced cardboard boxes for delivery to and storage at service sites.

The lunch components were assembled at each individual site either by the recreation leaders or by the children themselves under close supervision. The lunch components were placed in brown paper bags, along with a straw and a napkin.

Snack items, fruit juice and cookies were counted, assembled and labeled

for the appropriate food service site at the central point. Juices were chilled overnight in the kitchen refrigerators and placed in refrigerated trucks in the morning for delivery to the food service site. Once received at the site, juices and cookies were served immediately. Juices were poured into 9-ounce paper cups and unwrapped cookies were dispensed by recreation workers using a plastic glove.

Transportation and Accounting

The staff of the Cincinnati Municipal Garage handled all transportation requirements. They acquired four rental refrigerated trucks and drivers, supplied gasoline and oil, and provided parking space during non-delivery hours.

Before the program began, dry runs were made to familiarize the drivers with their routes. Each route covered between 40 to 50 miles to and from the Municipal Garage, and required about equal time for total delivery. This enabled the drivers to finish the last delivery at approximately the same time. After completing the deliveries, one or two drivers picked up supplies from the commercial warehouse and delivered them to the central kitchen or supplemental meal assembly area for the following day's needs.

Each truck driver used a summary form as an invoice for all sites on his route. The school food service division completed those entries on the kinds and amounts of food delivered to each site each day. The truck driver had only to obtain the signature of each site supervisor on duplicate forms at each stop, after the site supervisor had checked the deliveries and invoice.

The driver kept both copies of the form and turned in one copy to the Municipal Garage and one copy to the school food service division each day. Forms accumulated by the Municipal Garage were turned over to the Recreation Commission daily via the commission messenger.

A daily record form was used at each site to record the number of meals delivered, number served, payments for meals, and excess lunches (overages). The system of recording transfers of overages worked out

quite well. The form required information on the names of the sites from which and to which an overage was transferred, and the signature of the area supervisor effecting the transfer.

Further bookkeeping provisions were made with regard to meal payments. Each area supervisor was provided with receipt books and summary sheets for recording child and adult payments received from site supervisors.

Monies were collected from the sites approximately once per week, totaled on the summary sheet, and turned in with the forms each week to the Recreation Commission's Accounting Division.

All information received by the Recreation Commission from the sites was checked against that received from School Food Service. Entries regarding overages were followed up to see that the appropriate entries had been made by both the site receiving meals and the site transferring the meals.

Food Acceptability

During the course of the project, FNS and the Cincinnati School Food Service conducted a review of food acceptability as well as an evaluation of management operation. Trained monitors collected general information on each recreational center, and specific data on meal service, record-keeping, cup-can practicability, food acceptability, and plate waste.

As expected, the hot lunch entrees ranked highest among the children. Specifically, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, fish sandwiches, and frankfurters scored high. Next in popularity were sandwiches made with the cold luncheon meats—ham, ham and cheese, turkey, bologna, and the frozen engineered tuna, chicken, and ham salad. Sandwiches made with spiced luncheon meats, dutch loaf, and pickle loaf were less popular. Peanut butter sandwiches proved

quite unsatisfactory to the children.

Fruits incorporated in the menus, especially canned apricots, apple sauce, pineapple, fruit cocktail, peaches and pears, were well-accepted. Equally well-liked were fresh apples, bananas, nectarines, plums, canteloupe, oranges and raisins.

In general, vegetables and salads were the menu items most often rejected. Specifically, carrots and celery sticks, coleslaw with carrots, and the garden salads were discarded; the only highly acceptable vegetable item was a dill pickle stick.

Also highly successful was a commercially produced bakery item, which contributed essential nutrients.

The one-half pint of milk provided in the program was extremely well-accepted by the children. Some sites were given permission to serve chocolate-flavored milk, which was also well-consumed.

Experimentation with cup-can entrees, a concept new to the Special Food Service Program, proved to be quite favorable at participating sites. Despite the fact that the hot can was somewhat difficult to handle, children thoroughly enjoyed the change and there was little waste. At those sites reviewed, the cup-can entrees which scored highest were chili and beans, spaghetti and meat sauce, chicken noodle dinner, and spaghetti and meat balls in tomato sauce. Beef goulash and beans with franks ranked lower.

At snack sites the most popular juices were grape juice and orange juice; pineapple and apple juice were not as well accepted. There was general satisfaction with specially formulated foods, particularly fortified doughnuts, giant wheels and peanut butter pastry, apple fruit pie, and peanut butter cookies. Evaluations of plate waste at both lunch and snack sites indicated only a minimum rejection of food items.

Costs

The Cincinnati project was designed to develop a financially sound food service. The food cost of menus as planned, cost of supplies, labor and overhead were considered in the cost of the lunch charged to the Cincinnati Recreation Commission by the Cincinnati School Board. This totaled 44.5 cents for each lunch. These same factors were considered in setting the cost of the snack, which was 11 cents per meal.

These figures do not reflect the cost of transporting the lunches and snacks to food service sites. This cost totaled 2.8 cents per meal.

The availability and use of USDA-donated foods helped to keep the cost of these meals reasonable.

Summary

The project clearly demonstrated that through careful planning and sound management, along with maximum utilization of available donated foods, a financially sound summer food service program can be operated.

Determining the type of food service to be offered based on the site capability proved to be one of the key factors in the success of the project.

Unsophisticated equipment such as milk coolers and styrofoam food carriers proved to be quite satisfactory when used for storing hot and cold sandwiches, some fruits and vegetables, and milk. This food service equipment helped meet the objective of providing acceptable meals to children in playground situations during the summer months. ☆

The authors are staff members of the Food and Nutrition Service, Washington, D.C. Joan Luck is a food systems analyst with the Nutrition and Technical Services Staff, and Milton Papke is Assistant Chief, Program Operations Branch, Child Nutrition Division.



WALKER COUNTY builds its Food Distribution Program

By Thomas A. Gregory

THERE WAS A time—not too long ago, in fact—when Walker County, Georgia, distributed USDA-donated food in a manner that brought little credit to the Nation's efforts to help the poor. To put it mildly, the program was an embarrassment to all concerned.

The officials of the State Division of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Resources, as well as the county officials, were not proud of the way needy people in Walker County were being assisted. Like so many other counties, however, there was a shortage of funds.

The huge supply of food was stored in a large floorless building that had once been used as the livestock building for the county fair and later for cattle sales. It was cold, dark, damp and dirty. In the winter, wind whistled through the cracks while a big stove in the corner made futile efforts to keep people warm.

"It was depressing just to walk into the muddy area," recalls one staff member of the County Department of Family and Children Services. "And when a warehouseman reached down and handed a recipient a container that had been dropped in the dirt, one could see humiliation and disgust."

In June 1970, when FNS made available supplementary funds to assist such needy counties, two members of the State Division of Family

and Children Services seized the opportunity to help Walker County.

"I told our State director that if any county needed help desperately, it was Walker," says Travis Holtzclaw, chief food consultant of the division.

Together with Mrs. Bess Thomason, the department's field food consultant, Holtzclaw met with commissioners and officials of the County Department of Family and Children Services and outlined their plans for converting Walker County's food distribution center to one of the State's finest.

They were given the green light to proceed. In record time a new location was found and renovation begun on a building that would become the new center.

"Our first priority," Mrs. Thomason explains, "was to provide the county with a modern center where food could be stored and distributed under conditions as modern and sanitary as the finest supermarket. It had to be clean and inviting in appearance."

After watching the defeated and hopeless look on the faces of the people picking up food in the old building, Mrs. Thomason concluded that it was also essential to make special provisions that would help change the attitudes of the recipients.

Toward this end, the plans included a nursery, restrooms and other facilities for the convenience of the re-

cipients, and a small but complete kitchen with ample dining space. The kitchen was to be located near the front door—easily accessible to all who entered.

A kitchen in a food distribution center?

That question was asked many times, but the answer was easy for Mrs. Betty Kean, a vivacious non-professional homemaker with experience in school lunch operation and hospital food service. A staff member at the new center, Mrs. Kean had a free hand in pioneering this unique addition to the food distribution program.

Mrs. Kean agreed with Mrs. Thomason's hopes that something could be done to change the attitude of poor people who came to the center for their families' food. She felt it was important not only to show housewives how to prepare a variety of tasty and nutritious dishes from the food they received, but also to improve the image of USDA-donated foods.

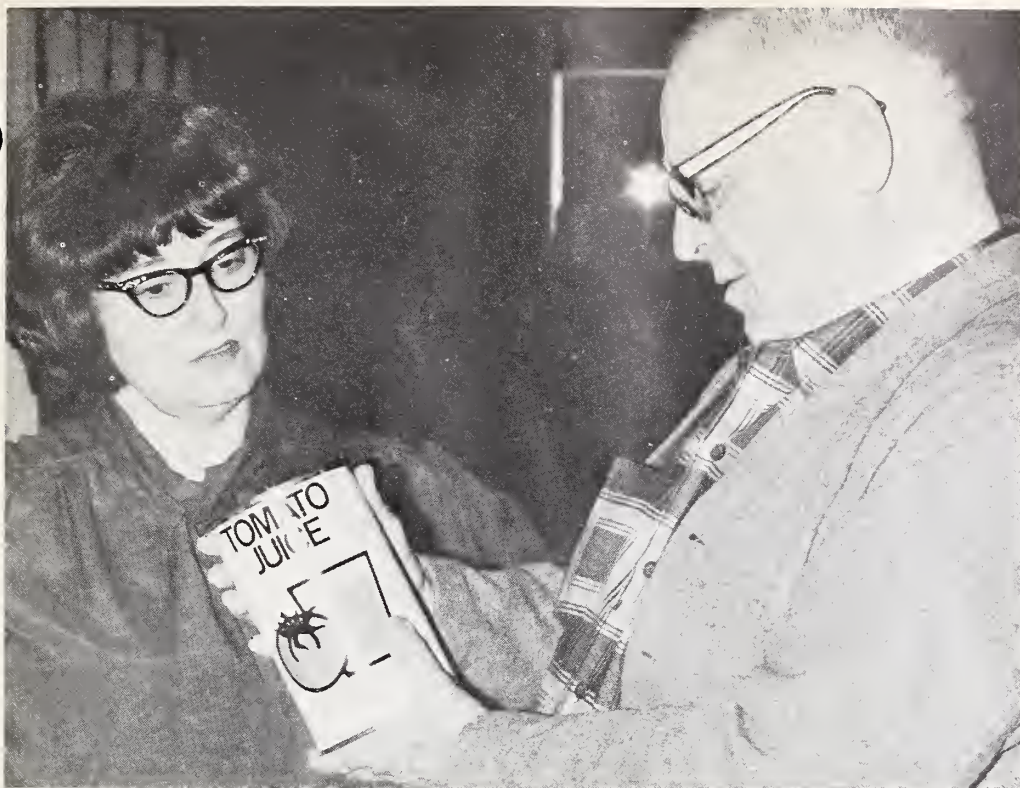
To complement these objectives, Mrs. Kean was determined to make their monthly visits to the food center pleasant. Without this atmosphere, she felt nothing else could be accomplished.

However, Mrs. Kean soon learned that even with supplementary funds, her plans were larger than her pocketbook. Determined to carry out the project, she turned to her ingenious staff.

Mrs. Mary Huett, whose husband had recently retired from the Army, volunteered to go to a nearby Army base and purchase a surplus varicolored parachute to spread out as a ceiling in the nursery. It gave the room the appearance of a big circus tent. Manufacturers and merchants donated carpet for the nursery floor and then concrete blocks, lumber, and paint, which the staff used to make colorful bookcases.

Excited by the progress, others came forward with toys, books, bulletin boards, games and pictures. It was a real outpouring of genuine interest by the people of the county, Mrs. Kean recalls, and in short time, the nursery was the pride of the center.

Mrs. Kean and her staff then



Recipients pick up USDA-donated foods in Walker County's new self-service center.

equipped the kitchen and dining area, which they wanted to be attractive, but not too fancy.

"These two features proved even more popular than we anticipated," says the project's director. "The kids liked the nursery so much that they all wanted to come with their mothers. Then when they arrived, they always wanted to play a little longer. This gave us extra time to chat with the mothers in the kitchen."

The biggest hit, however, was the kitchen and dining area, which gave the center a homey touch. As she had hoped, it also provided Mrs. Kean with a place to get to know the families and to offer them some practical lessons in nutrition.

"There were many items on the USDA-donated food list that were so foreign to many of the people that they got little use from them," she explains. "In some instances, they simply threw them away."

So she started her program by preparing dishes made with items unfamiliar to the housewives. When the women stopped by to get their food, Mrs. Kean insisted that they come into the kitchen for a cup of coffee and "a sample of a new dish I just tried."

Often the recipients expressed surprise that "dried prunes could be made to taste like that" or that

"powdered milk could be mixed to taste so good." Mrs. Kean would then explain what she had done and offer them recipes to take home.

A Walker County caseworker remembers Mrs. Kean's success in getting housewives to use self-rising flour and meal after so many had refused to try to bake with them.

The caseworker adds that Mrs. Kean has reached scores of others she had considered hopeless. One woman with two married daughters attended nutrition education classes with typical success.

"The husband told me," she says, "that before his wife attended the meetings, her cooking was limited to making coffee and bologna sandwiches. Now they have real meals."

Soon the housewives began bringing samples of their own culinary art along with recipes. It became almost a game, Mrs. Kean remembers, to see who could prepare a new dish with the USDA foods. Each morning the table would be filled with delightful cooking.

This was too good not to be shown to the public, so the food distribution staff planned a food fair. It was a success beyond all expectations. Housewives entered food in a number of categories—meats, pastries, breads and casseroles. Over 50 en-

tries were judged and the merchants of Lafayette, the county seat, provided enough prizes for every entry to win something. The *Walker County Messenger* was generous with its pictorial coverage.

"It gave the whole program a lift," points out Mrs. Thomason. "The housewives felt proud of themselves, and the community at large looked at the food distribution program in a different light after the fair."

Mrs. Kean gives much credit to the success of the nutrition program to the assistance of other agencies, such as the Walker County Departments of Health and of Family and Children Services, the Senior Citizens Program, the Salvation Army, and numerous volunteers. USDA provided leaflets, posters, food guides, recipes and other informational material.

In addition to the direct instruction at the center, the nutrition education program piloted by Mrs. Kean has included group meetings throughout the county. Over a period of 2 months, the homemakers held 39 group meetings which were attended by 618 housewives. They represented 2,952 recipients.

Mrs. Robbie Stewart, director of the County Department of Family and Children Services, is pleased with the progress that has been made at the new center. She feels that it has done much to improve the nutritional status of the people.

There is evidence of the nutrition education program throughout the new center, which resembles a modern warehouse.

Recipients roll their carts down the aisles as they would in a supermarket, and an attendant helps them load the food. To make it easy for them to identify the foods, the imaginative staff has placed in each row colorful photographs of the food items with the names in bold letters. At the end of the line is a large selection of free recipes.

"Through imagination and hard work," declares Mrs. Thomason, "the staff of a food distribution center can provide needy people with far more than boxes of grits, boned turkey, flour and other USDA-donated food. The people up in Walker County, Georgia certainly do." ☆

GROCERS HELP WITH FOOD STAMP OUTREACH

"SPECIAL: Grapefruit, 3 for 49¢."

"Giant size detergent only 55¢."

"Low in food funds? Maybe food stamps can help."

The first two items above might be typical excerpts from countless supermarket advertisements appearing in newspapers across the Nation. But the third? Well, it too is becoming somewhat typical in the same ads, as 27 food chain divisions in the Northeast cooperate with USDA to reach needy persons with the food stamp message.

People receiving welfare payments are usually informed automatically of their eligibility to participate in the food stamp program. But many who are not eligible for welfare are still candidates for food stamps. These include persons with small savings who get by on low salaries, pensions, or social security. The elderly poor, proud of a lifetime of independence and often isolated from much public contact are especially difficult to reach.

About a year ago, the Northeast FNS regional office approached supermarket chains with an idea to help solve this problem.

"We wanted to place food stamp information through a medium that needy people would be likely to see," explains Regional Administrator Wallace Warren. "People in need of food bargains look for news of specials in newspaper ads or store handbills. Why not, we thought, include mention of food stamps right in the ads?"

"We sent letters to the major food chains in the Northeast. Our appeal was to cooperate both as a public service and because the spread of food stamps in an area generally brings more business to local stores."

A sample ad was sent with the letters, incorporating a suggested food stamp message: "if your salary is low . . . if you're on social security . . .

if you're on a small pension . . . USDA food stamps help buy more and better food." A list of local food stamp information telephone numbers was included. If the list proved too long to use in ads, the stores were advised to state simply, "For more information, call your local public assistance office."

Food stamp officers-in-charge in some field offices followed up with personal and telephone contacts with store executives. These resulted not only in additional newspaper space, but in other promotional efforts such as store window posters and in-store cards featuring local food stamp phone numbers.

The success of such a campaign is hard to gauge. But one sign of success is the fact that 27 regional divisions of food chains, with hundreds of individual stores, have so far participated; their total annual sales are estimated at \$3 billion.

Also, one chain alone, with stores in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, reported that its special food stamp ads had appeared in 28 newspapers with a combined circulation of more than four million. Another chain said that 70 papers in upstate New York and Pennsylvania had carried its ads. Significantly, many of these papers represent small town and rural areas, which are frequently difficult to penetrate.

Of course, final success can only be determined by response from the people the campaign is trying to reach. In Philadelphia, after a major chain featured the local food stamp information office phone number in its newspaper ads, the office was flooded with inquiries and additional phone lines had to be installed. Local certification offices in certain other areas have also reported increased activity during the last few months which may be attributable to this promotion.



School Lunch in High Point: A COMMUNITY'S PRIDE

By Lois Stecker



“CHILDREN ARE THE wealth of our nation,” says Mary Dillard as she proudly watches a roomful of youngsters tackle their lunches. “We have to bring them up healthy.”

School food service supervisor for the High Point, N.C., schools, Mrs. Dillard has in 9 years guided the city's once disorganized school lunch operation (with deficit) to an efficient, financially sound program of which local citizens are proud.

Still a comparatively small operation, the multi-faceted program reaches an average of 8500 people. The school food service staff now provides attractive nutritious lunches at minimum production cost to students in 16 schools; satellites lunches to handicapped kindergarten children; and has meal contracts for day

care centers, summer programs, and home-delivered meals for the elderly.

In 1962, a 51-to-49 percent citizen-parent referendum gave the green light for the city school system to participate in the National School Lunch Program. This close decision—indicating that considerable opposition still existed—presented a real challenge to Mrs. Dillard. Supported by the school administration, but given latitude to act, she overcame the deficit in 2 years.

Student participation began to increase, reaching a high for the system of 77.7 percent in 1969-1970. Although about half of the high school student body leaves campus during lunch hour, Mrs. Dillard is confident that the students who remain at school participate in the program.

Asked for the reason for the suc-

cess of the program, High Point's dynamic food service supervisor answers “flexibility.”

“Flexibility to change is essential,” she explains. “When something doesn't work, we go another route.”

Three years ago when food production in some of the smaller schools became economically impractical, Mrs. Dillard purchased a rebuilt Army van, outfitted it, and initiated a satellite program. Based at Tomlinson Elementary School, the operation has worked so well that in addition to preparing and packing lunches for 375 Tomlinson students and 500 children in two other elementary schools, the food service staff now assembles lunches for 170 pre-schoolers in six day care centers, about 50 handicapped kindergarten children, and 50 elderly served by High Point's volun-

The day begins early for High Point's food service supervisor Mary Dillard (below) and her staff. Preparation of the main course of meaty pizza gets underway at 7:30 a.m., and by mid-morning manager Jean Wright (right) sees that more than 1100 lunches are packed for the satellite operation. The Tomlinson School lunch crew (below) packs the hot portions of the meals in styrofoam containers.



teer meal delivery service.

The atmosphere at Tomlinson is clean, efficient and cheerful, as manager Jean Wright checks to make sure that everything is on schedule. Mrs. Wright is Mrs. Dillard's trusted "Girl Friday." She drives the van when necessary and follows up on emergency warehouse calls, all the while supervising quality control, production, lunch packing and the serving line for Tomlinson students.

By mid-morning Jean Wright and her staff have completed preparing the day's lunches and are ready to pack them in insulated cases. They portion the lunches into covered styrofoam trays moving on a belt, stack them in plastic racks, and place three racks of 12 in each insulated case. These will hold the meals at proper temperature for over 3 hours.

Just before loading the van, they transfer the cold pre-portioned lunch items from the cooler shelves to boxes.

As the final preparations are made, the cafeteria door opens and the Mobile Meals volunteers assemble quietly in the front of the lunchroom to make final arrangements for their deliveries. The schedules and routes have been made weeks in advance by co-chairwomen from the sponsoring groups, Church Women United and the High Point Section Council of Jewish Women.

Each day at 10:45 five pairs of volunteers pick up the meals, and make 10 to 12 deliveries, often staying long enough at each home to make sure that everything is all right. Co-chairwomen Mrs. Semmie Jacobs and Mrs. Vicki Dallas point out that

many of the volunteers have become personally involved with Mobile Meals recipients. They have helped rehabilitate a young blind woman, directed several people to better care in nursing homes, and relieved many others of the loneliness of aging.

The nonprofit and completely volunteer delivery service pays the High Point Food Service 55 cents for each meal provided. This financial obligation is fulfilled through donations from local businesses, individuals and church groups, as well as United Funds and Social Service aid.

The meals prepared for the satellite operation generally conform to the central menu planned for use in all elementary schools, however, substitutions are made when items do not transport satisfactorily.

Another menu—also based on

USDA's Type A pattern—is used for both the senior and junior high schools. Senior high school students have a choice of either a hot lunch or salad plate—each nutritious and equally attractive. The “choice” program has been a real hit with the high school students, and Mrs. Dillard hopes to initiate a similar program in the junior high schools.

In all of the schools, the morale of the food service staff is high—thanks in great part to the efforts of Mrs. Dillard. There's a “team spirit,” as she calls it, that even a visitor can sense in just a few moments. Mrs. Dillard respects her employees and makes special efforts to provide in-service training and opportunities for career advancement.

Last summer, for example, she recognized that participating in USDA's Special Food Service Program would

not only benefit needy youngsters but also provide summer jobs for school food service personnel. Through Mrs. Dillard's urging, Model Cities and High Point authorities cooperated as sponsors for the program, which provided lunches to more than 3,400 children, including 1,600 needy youngsters.

During the 15-week period, each food service manager rotated in various positions—baker, meat-vegetable cook, salad cook, general manager—thereby gaining new competencies for her job.

The enthusiasm of the food service personnel, the teachers, and the students is evidence of Mrs. Dillard's talent for involving others in both school and community. She has worked with elementary school teachers to plan tasting parties and nutrition jingles and songs.

And, she has helped interest students in the elderly feeding program. Last Thanksgiving third and fourth graders made tray favors for Mobile Meals participants, and high school students donated baskets of fruit.

Mary Dillard explains, “School Food Service Program is the basis for the other programs, but they are all the community's responsibility. In these 9 years we've moved to more humane and democratic programs.

“I don't care who gets the credit,” she says. “It's getting the job done that's important. Maybe other administrators and supervisors will see the broad scope of possibility in school food service.” ☆

Lois Stecker is School Food Service Consultant, North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction.



Mobile Meals volunteers greet one of the elderly participants in High Point's nonprofit meal delivery service. The volunteers deliver hot lunches each day to 50 elderly and incapacitated people.

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